



VERMONT

VERMONT COMMUNITY BROADBAND BOARD

**Presentation to the Senate Committee on Education
January 27, 2023**

Christine Hallquist, Executive Director
Rob Fish, Deputy Director

[HTTPS://PUBLICSERVICE.VERMONT.GOV/VCBB](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/vcbb)



In 2023 you
need more
than a good
school for
a good
education

ALL STUDENTS NEED THE
SAME ACCESS TO
LEARNING AT HOME =
BROADBAND FOR ALL

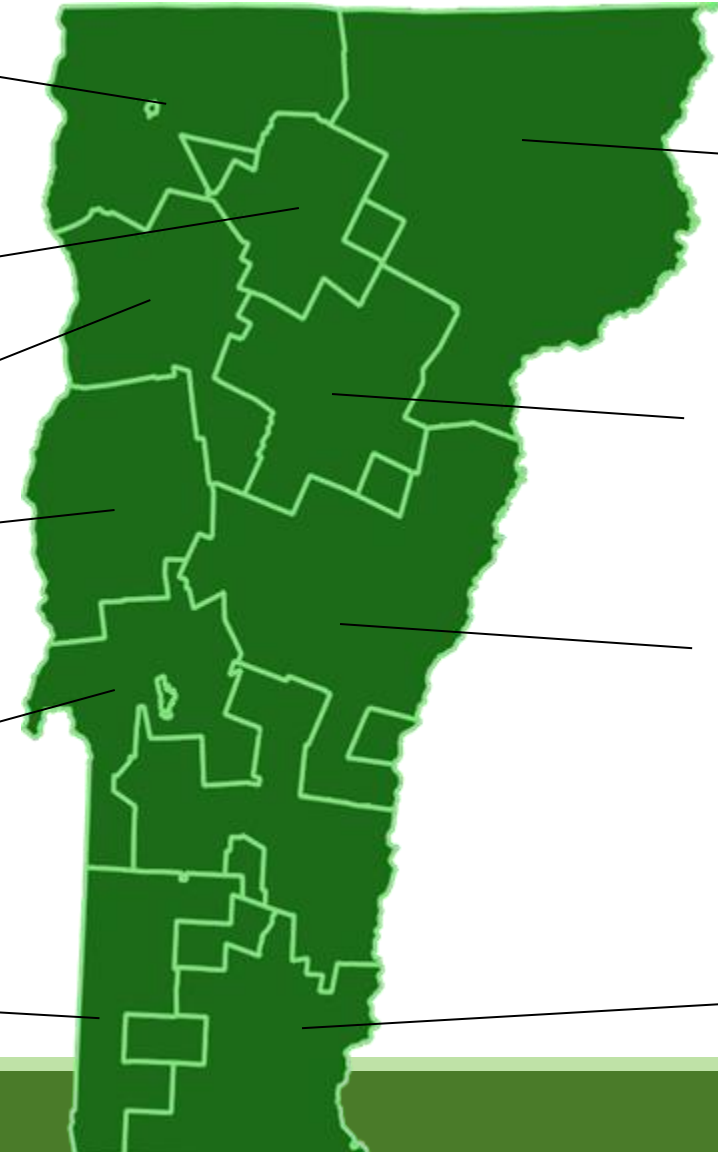
Vermont Communications Union Districts

Developed under the direction of hundreds of community volunteers.



SoVT CUD

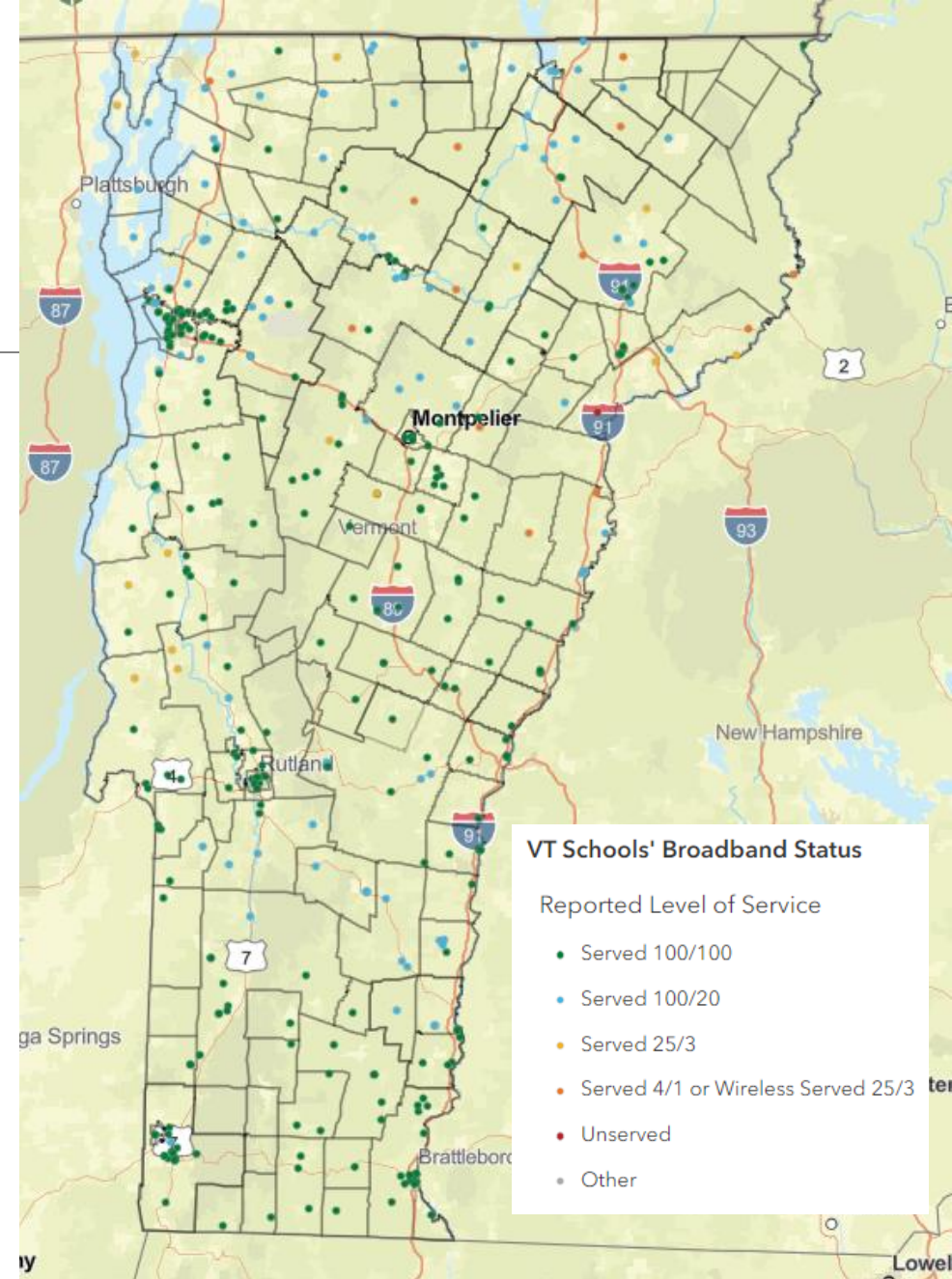
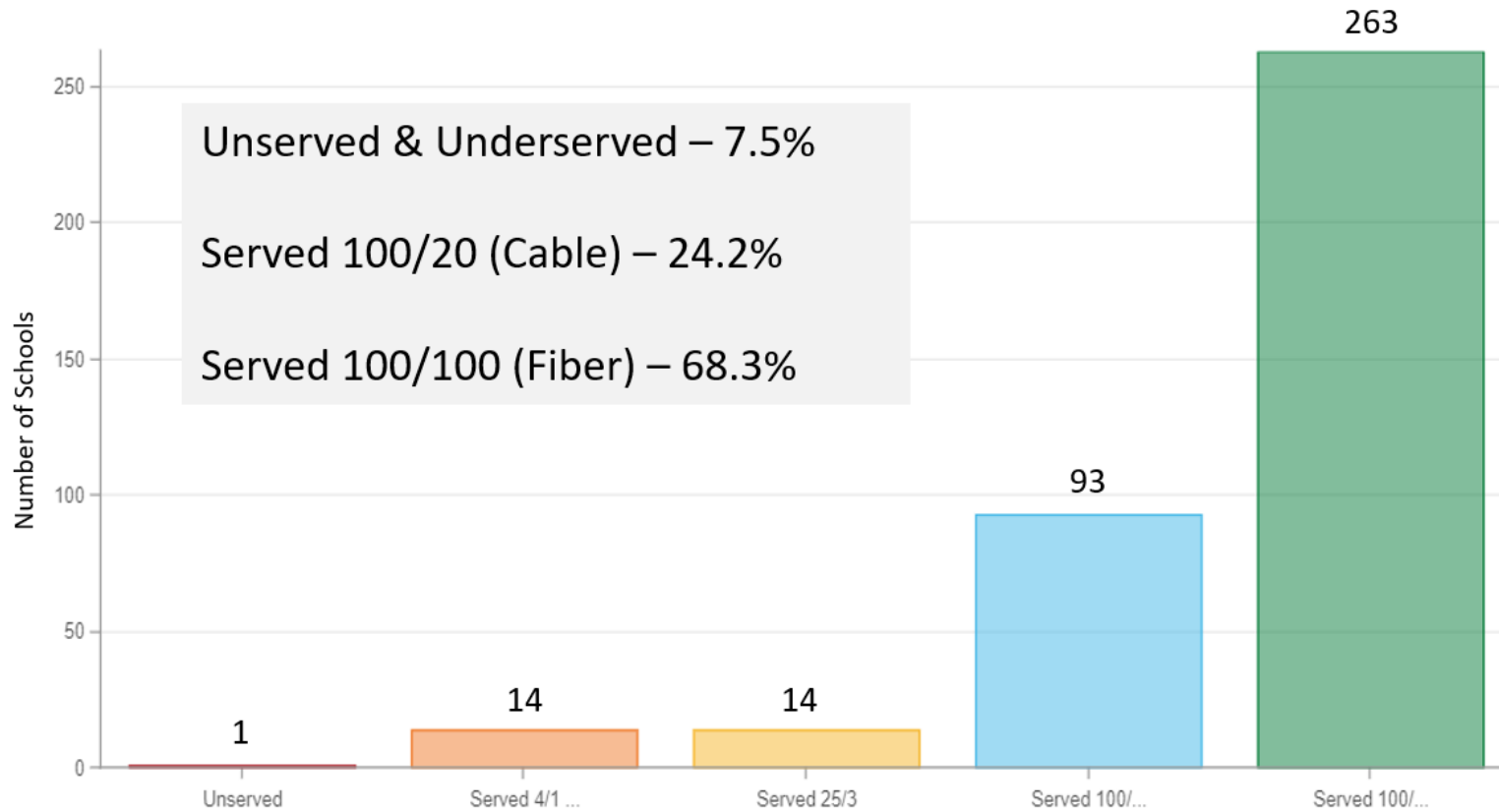
Chittenden County CUD

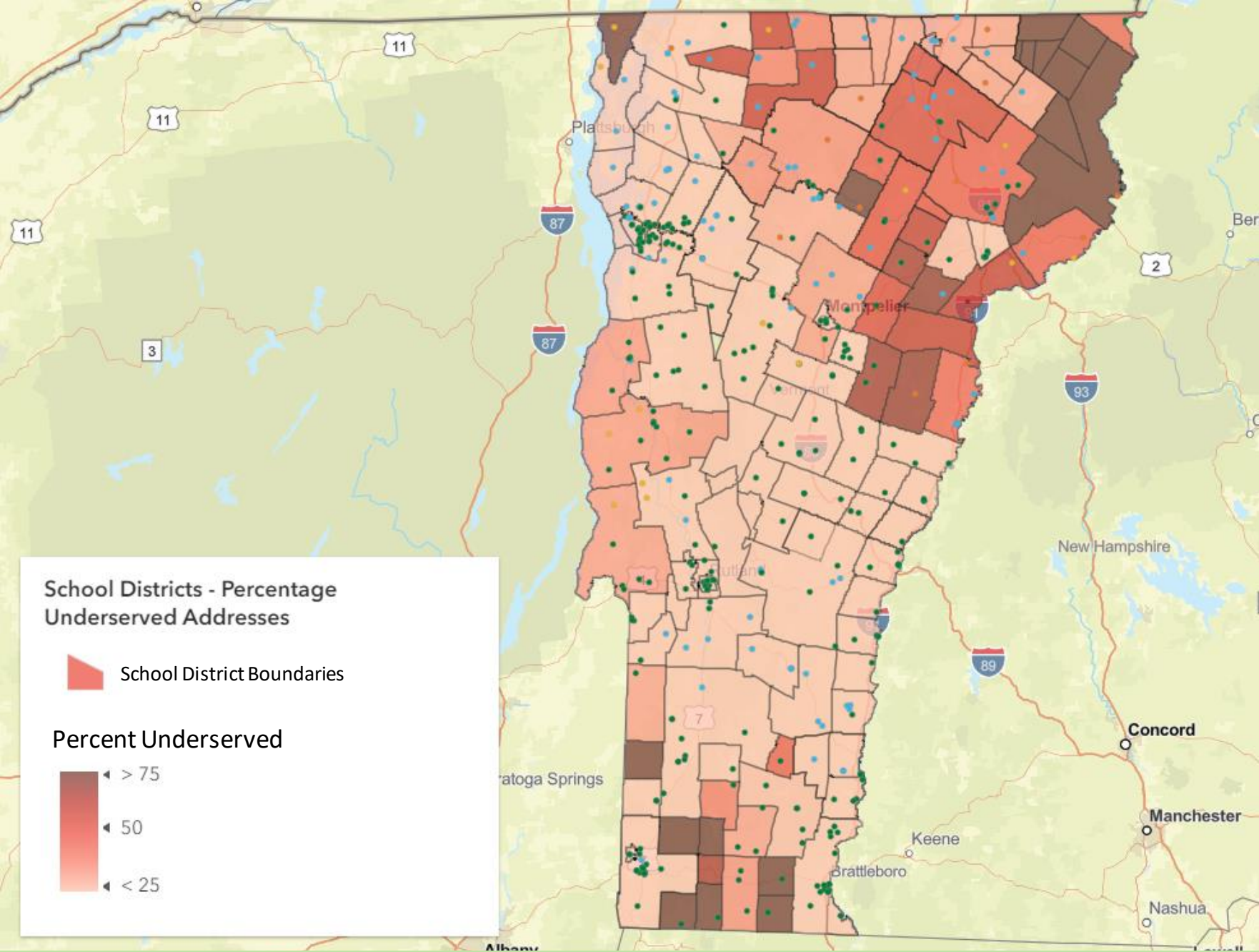


Vermont Schools' Broadband Status

Interactive K-12 School Broadband Map available at:

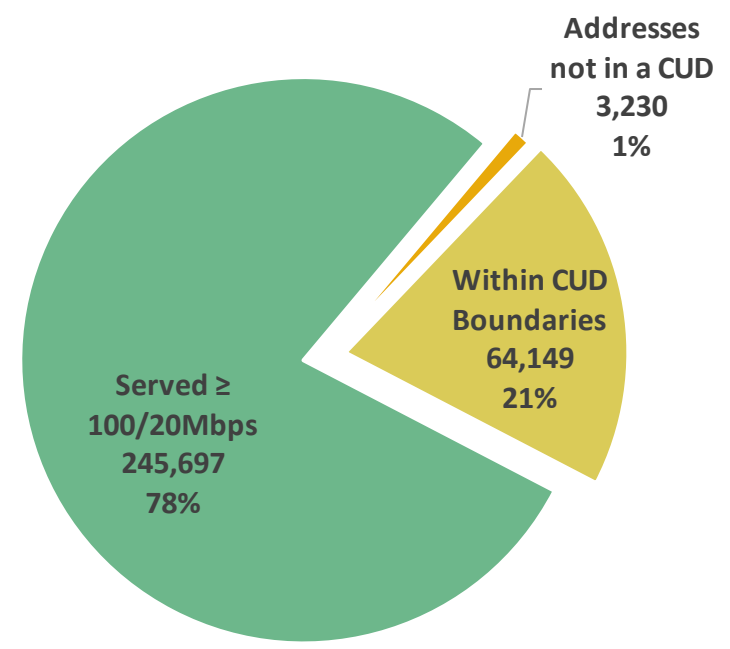
<https://explore-vcbb.hub.arcgis.com/>

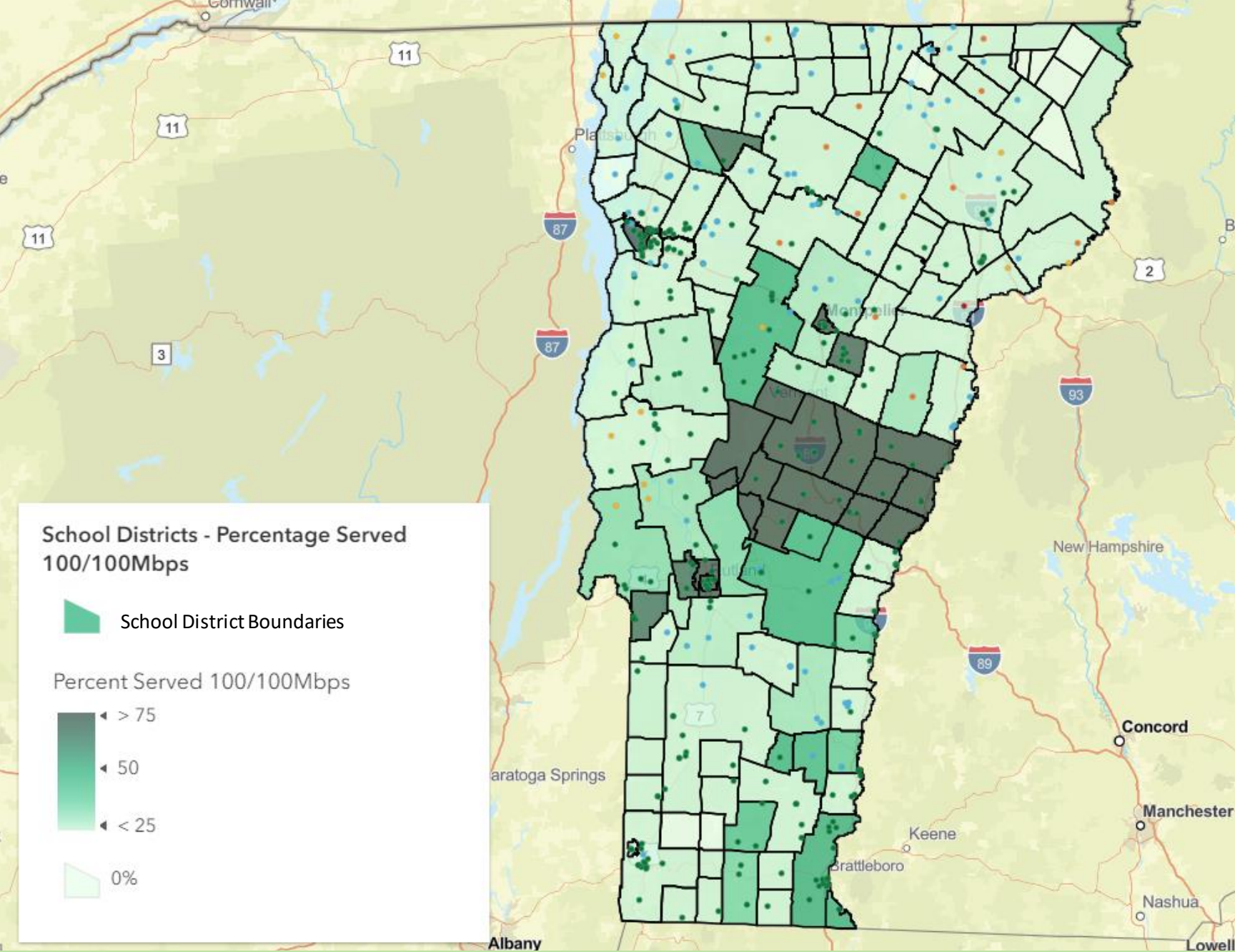




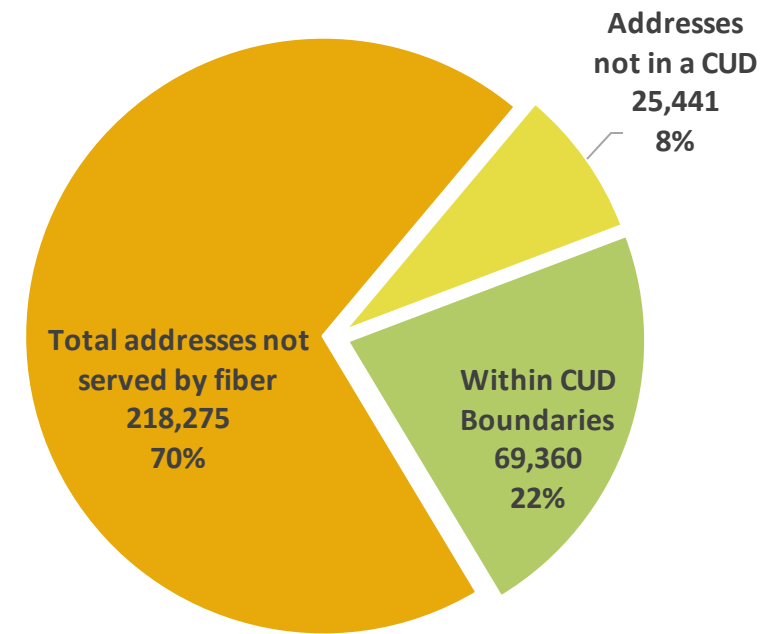
Statewide, 22% of Addresses Lack Sufficient Broadband Service

*Based on NTIA Definition of Underserved <100/20Mbps





Statewide, 30% of Addresses Are Served By Fiber



Funding Model

Grant funding and donations provide initial funding (~ 60%).

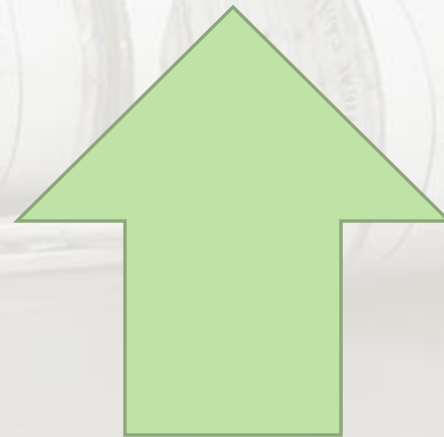
Rural Broadband is expensive, but on avg, statewide, every add'l \$50M provided in grants reduces consumer rate by about \$10/mo.



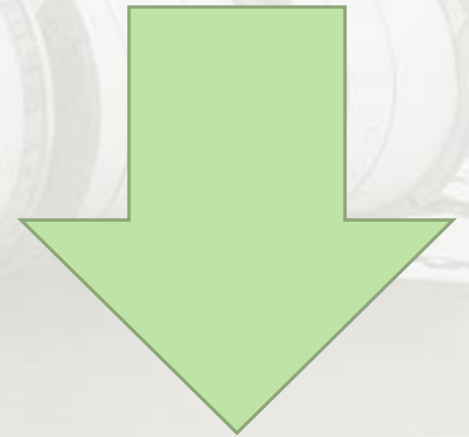
**Traditional Borrowing
Consumer (loans, bonds)**



**= Higher
Prices**



**Grants &
Creative Finance**



**= Lower Prices for
Consumers**

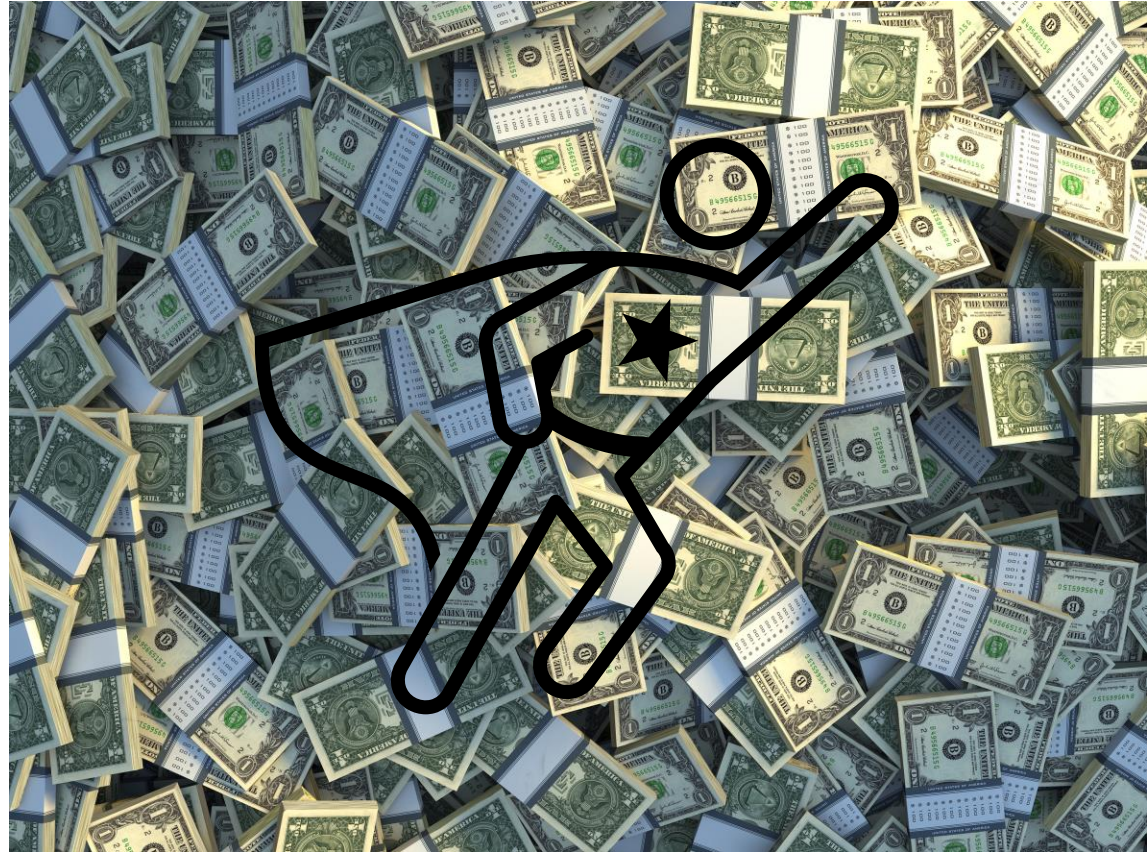
Budget Adjustment Act

28) \$30,000,000 to the Public Service Department for the Vermont Community Broadband Board to be used to leverage federal dollars and programs, including the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) broadband grant (Middle Mile), to reduce the overall cost of universal broadband access as described in Act 71(2021).

EXPLANATION: \$30M represents the State match toward the \$114,164,581 NTIA grant application submitted on 9/30/22. Anticipated federal receipts are \$67,445,239 with additional cash and in-kind match provided by all VT fiber-optic networks benefiting from the Middle Mile infrastructure (FirstLight, ECFiber and NEK Broadband). The match must be secured as the time of awarding which is expected in March. If the grant is not awarded, the funds will be used to leverage other federal dollars or programs to reduce the overall cost of universal broadband access as described in Act 71(2021).

Supercharges our Dollars

- **Middle Mile** - \$30 Million becomes \$114 Million
- **BEAD** - \$30 Million becomes \$120 Million



State Match Needed For Other Federal Grants

- Grant funding to provide more initial funding
- CUDs incur lower borrowing costs or borrow for less
- Since CUDs are non-profit municipalities the capital savings are passed on to Vermonters
- Certainty in changing financial conditions



Leverage Other Federal Programs

BEAD Program

- Requires a 25% match
- \$30 million investment becomes \$150 million

USDA Rural Development Telecom Loan and Grant Programs:

ReConnect

- Maximum award of \$35 million
- 25% match required

Community Connects Grant

- 15% match required

Northern Borders Regional Commission Infrastructure Development Grants

- \$150 million available in new funding across ME, NH, NY, and VT
- Match likely required (program is in development)



Grants & Creative Finance = Lower Prices for Consumers



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Digital divide is the issue.
Digital equity is the goal.
Digital inclusion is the work.

Vermont Community Broadband Board

- *Questions?*

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Communications Union Districts
Contact info:
<https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/vermont-communications-union-districts>

